NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS

HERE'S THE

The Original Album

REMASTERED FROM ORIGINAL MASTER TAPES

1. HOLIDAYS IN THE SUN
2. BODIES
3. NO FEELINGS
4. LIAR
5. GOD SAVE THE QUEEN
6. PROBLEMS
7. SEVENTEEN
8. ANARCHY IN THE UK
9. SUBMISSION
10. PRETTY VACANT
11. NEW YORK
12. EMI

B-Sides

13. NO FEELING
(B-SIDE OF WITHDRAWN
'GOD SAVE THE QUEEN' ON A&M RECORDS)
14. DID YOU NO WRONG
(B-SIDE OF 'GOD SAVE THE QUEEN')
15. NO FUN
(B-SIDE OF 'PRETTY VACANT')
16. SATELLITE
(B-SIDE OF 'HOLIDAYS IN THE SUN')

Live 1977

Stockholm, Happy House

SWEDEN
JULY 28TH 1977
FULL SOUNDBOARD RECORDING

1. ANARCHY IN THE UK
2. I WANNA BE ME
3. SEVENTEEN
4. NEW YORK
5. EMI
6. SUBMISSION
7. NO FEELINGS
8. PROBLEMS
9. GOD SAVE THE QUEEN
10. PRETTY VACANT
11. NO FUN

Penzance, WINTER Gardens

CORNWALL
SEPTEMBER 1ST 1977
(S.P.O.T.S. TOUR)

12. PROBLEMS
13. NO FUN
14. ANARCHY IN THE UK

Part One

Never Mind The Bollocks Here's The Sex Pistols

Remastered from original master tapes

1. Holidays In The Sun
2. Bodies
3. No Feelings
4. Liar
5. God Save The Queen
6. Problems
7. Seventeen
8. Anarchy In The UK
9. Submission
10. Pretty Vacant
11. New York
12. EMI
13. No Feeling
B-side of withdrawn 'God Save The Queen' 7" on A&M Records Release date would have been March 25th 1977
14. Did You No Wrong
B-side of 'God Save The Queen' 7" Released May 27th 1977
15. No Fun

B-side of 'Pretty Vacant' 7" Released July 2nd 1977

16. Satellite
B-side of 'Holidays in the Sun' 7" Released October 15th 1977

Produced by Chris Thomas, except tracks 13 & 15 produced by Dave Goodman

Engineered by Bill Price

John Lydon: Vocals
Steve Jones: Guitar & Bass
Paul Cook: Drums
Glen Matlock: Bass (tracks 8, 13 & 15)

Recording Dates

*(Wessex Studios, London, except * Riverside Recordings Studio):*
*'No Feeling' July 27th 1976 • 'No Fun' October 16th 1976 • 'Anarchy In The UK' October 17th 1976
'Pretty Vacant' March 3rd 1977 • 'God Save The Queen' & 'Did You No Wrong' March 10th 1977
'No Feelings', 'Liar', 'Problems' & 'Seventeen' April 21st 1977
'Submission', 'New York', 'EMI' & 'Satellite' April 22nd 1977
'Holidays In The Sun' June 11th 1977 • 'Bodies' June 18th 1977

Part Two

Live 1977

John Lydon: Vocals • Steve Jones: Guitar • Paul Cook: Drums • Sid Vicious: Bass

Live at Happy House, Stockholm
July 28th, 1977

1. Anarchy In The UK
2. I Wanna Be Me
3. Seventeen
4. New York
5. EMI
6. Submission
7. No Feelings
8. Problems
9. God Save The Queen
10. Pretty Vacant
11. No Fun

Live at Winter Gardens, Penzance
September 1st, 1977

12. Problems
13. No Fun
14. Anarchy In The UK

NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS, HERE'S THE SEX PISTOLS

is without doubt one of the most important and influential albums ever released.

YOU NEED only think about how different the world would be today if the LP – with its now-legendary songs and lurid fluorescent artwork – hadn't appeared at the height of the punk era the Sex Pistols had created in October 1977. Its influence on music and graphic design has been immeasurable, as has the Pistols' wider impact on the music industry, fashion, politics, art, image, film – you name it. Never before or since have a dozen rock songs on (originally) two sides of plastic caused such a seismic and lasting eruption around the world.

Thirty-five years after its release, it becomes ever clearer that the album – made by four working-class London kids barely in their 20s – was a cultural tipping point, channelling the moment when lingering postwar attitudes in Britain were violently challenged and a new, modern era was ushered in. Propelled by singer John Lydon's fierce intelligence, and intuitive gift for causing maximum offence, the Pistols dared to dream of new England in the dark days of the mid-'70s: but their rebellion would have meant nothing unless they had the remarkable songs on 'Bollocks' to back them up.

The Sex Pistols as we know them had sparked into life two years before its release, in the summer of 1975, when north London native John Lydon – soon to be christened 'Johnny Rotten' by Steve Jones (on account of his decaying teeth) – joined an existing west London teenage group featuring Steve Jones (guitar), Glen Matlock (bass) and Paul Cook (drums). Their connection was a clothes shop on Chelsea's fashionable King's Road called 'Let It Rock', (later rebranded 'Sex') run by Malcolm McLaren and his partner Vivienne Westwood. The shop had become a hang-out in the mid-'70s for misfits, outcasts, free-thinkers and pop stars. Jones and Cook were genuine Shepherd's Bush delinquents, while Glen worked in the shop on Saturdays while dreaming of being a rock star at St Martin's art school.

Left to right: Paul Cook, Steve Jones, Glen Matlock and John Lydon on the roof at Dryden Chambers, off Oxford Street, September 1976.
Photo: Barry Plummer

Flyer for the El Paradise Strip Club, April 4th 1976

Flyer for the Notre Dame Hall, November 15th 1976

SEX PISTOLS
ON STAGE !!
at last !
LONDONS OUTRAGE !
SEX PISTOLS
++ MONDAY 15 NOVEMBER ++ 7 P.M. TILL 11.00 P.M. ++
++ THE NOTRE DAME HALL ++ LEICESTER PLACE ++
++ LEICESTER SQUARE ++ ADMISSION £1.00 ++

McLaren, who'd briefly spent time in America managing the notorious - but flakey - New York Dolls, was persuaded by Jones to become the fledgling group's manager. By all accounts he showed little interest in the band until after Lydon joined, but had encouraged them to audition singers to test how serious they were about their music.

Lydon was the son of Irish immigrants living in Finsbury Park in North London. Having had his "memory wiped" as a child after being hospitalised for several months with meningitis, John emerged in his teenage years as a natural rebel, questioning his Catholic teachers at school and generally revelling in mischief. He earned money working on a building site with his father, killing rats, and later by selling acid at concerts. His musical tastes reflected his original mind-set – reggae, folk, soul, avant-garde, always with an ear for a great pop song.

Lydon had caught the eye of Malcolm McLaren's associate Bernie Rhodes and Steve Jones when he'd walked down the street with short, spiky green hair and a Pink Floyd T-shirt defaced to read "I hate Pink Floyd". Steve and Malcolm then invited him to the Roebuck pub in Kings Road to check him out. Sensing John's potential, McLaren asked him to audition as vocalist by singing along to Alice Cooper's 'I'm Eighteen' on the shop's jukebox. John got the job, and over the following months began injecting everything the Sex Pistols did or played with his acidic personality and darkly playful humour. He began by transforming the opening line of the Small Faces' 'What You Gonna Do About It?' from "I want you to know that I love you baby…" to "I want you know that I HATE you baby". Soon he'd get to work writing his own lyrics for new songs titled 'Liar', 'No Feelings', 'Problems'… negatives of the love songs that had been the staple of pop music since it was first recorded.

After making their live debut at Matlock's college on Charing Cross Road on November 6, 1975 – on which they had the plugs pulled by the headlining group, including on bass the future Adam Ant – the Pistols knuckled down to being a working band, playing once or twice a week and recording demos, the first with session guitarist Chris Spedding in May 1976.

The Sex Pistols were touching a cultural nerve, and now had the songs to match their front. Lydon proved to be an extraordinary and provocative wordsmith, capable of creating witty slogans – "A cheap holiday in other people's misery!" ('Holidays In The Sun') – tongue-twisting word-play – "I am an Anti-Christ, I am an Anarchist" ('Anarchy In The UK') – and genuinely poetic otherworldly wisdom – "Where there's no future, how can there be sin?/We're the flowers in the dust-bin" ('God Save The Queen').

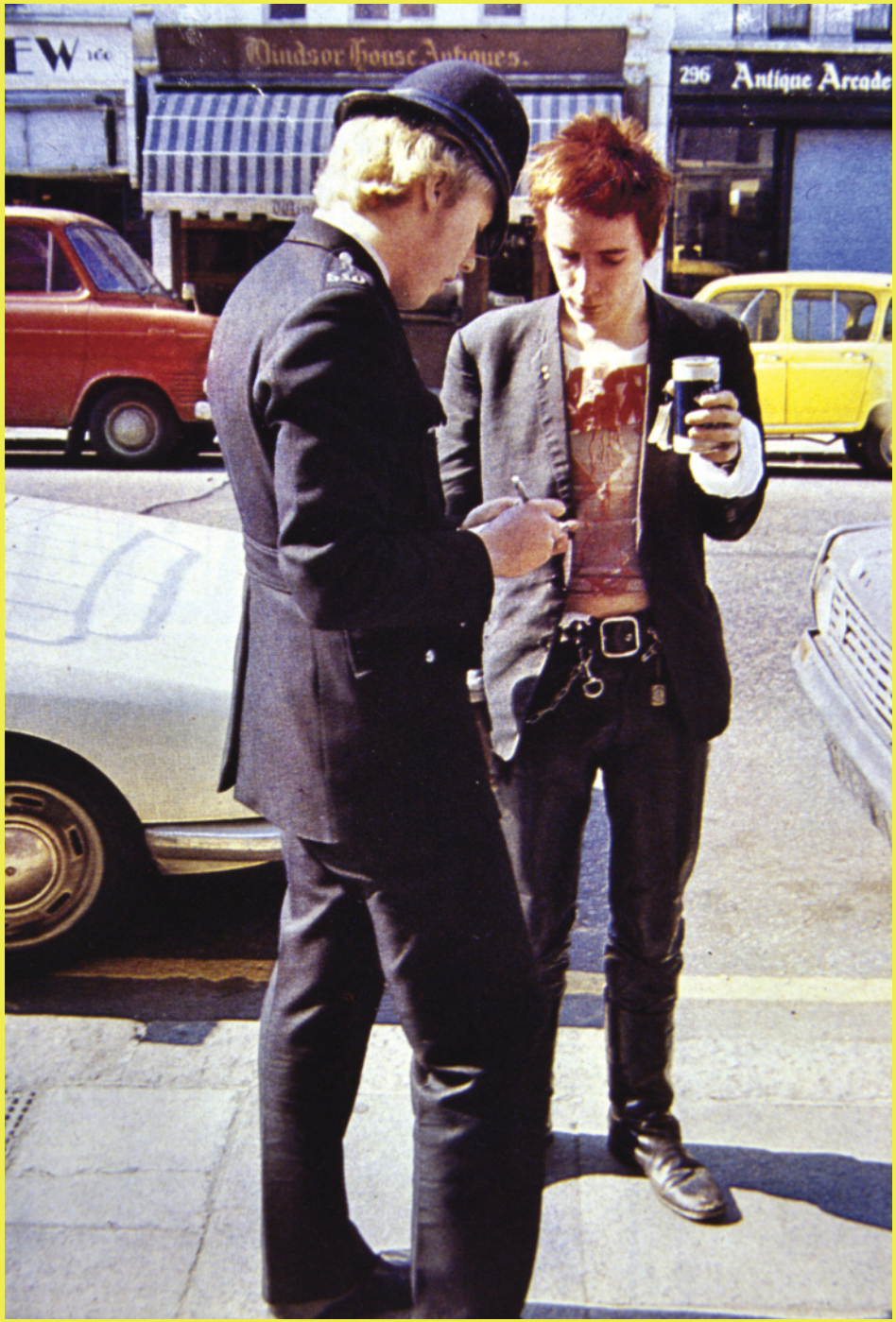
By the summer of 1976, the UK music press were taking a serious interest in the group, and to exploit this McLaren organised a 'Punk Special' at the 100 Club on 20 and 21 September, which saw Pistols-inspired groups including The Damned, Siouxsie & The Banshees, The Subway Sect and The Vibrators join the party. Within a month, EMI

had signed the group for £40,000, and work had started on their debut single and stirring clarion call, 'Anarchy In The UK'.

ROCK GROUP START A 4-LETTER TV STORM
Viewers in big protest over shock outburst
Sex Pistols inquiry over four-letter words
THE FOUL MOUTHED YOBS
– by TV's Bill Grundy
THESE REVOLTING VIPs!
Four-letter Punk Rock group in TV storm
Sex Pistols
The bizarre face of Punk Rock
'Worthless, decidedly inferior, displeasing...'
The Punks— Rotten and proud of it!
NEWS ON CAMERA
RUBBISH MUST NOT BE DEPOSITED IN THIS AREA BY ORDER
Fury at filthy TV chat
Obnoxious, arrogant, outrageous.. the new pop kings
WHO ARE THESE PUNKS?
FILTH AND THE FURY!
TV's Bill Grundy in rock outrage
?!★!

It was at this point that the Sex Pistols went public in a truly spectacular way, when they became front-page news with their infamous appearance on Thames 'Today' show on December 1. They had been invited on the early evening programme after EMI's flagship act Queen pulled out at the last minute, and appeared on-screen with their entourage (including future Banshees front woman Siouxsie Sioux) looking cool and unpredictable. Rotten began the interview's spiral into chaos when he said the word "shit", after which Steve Jones rose to presenter Bill Grundy's goading by calling him a "dirty fucker" and "fucking rotter". A nation for which swearing on TV, primetime or not, was virtually unheard of, was dumbstruck. Events then took a darkly comic turn when outraged viewers phoning in to complain were accidentally put through to the green room where the band were drinking, and gleefully abused further.

After the Grundy incident, authorities pulled the plug on the majority of the group's forthcoming 'Anarchy Tour' gigs, depriving gig-goers of an early opportunity to see the Pistols, Clash and Damned together on the same bill. The die had been cast: the Sex Pistols were now Public Enemy Number 1…



John Rotten questioned by a Police constable in Portobello Road, May 23rd *Photo: Barry Plummer*

John Lydon (vocals / lyrics):
We'd sworn on television, big deal. But suddenly it was like the whole world hated us. Which I was perfectly fine with me, it meant we were doing something right.

It was clear by January 1977 that the furore surrounding The Pistols wasn't about to die down. On January 4, they were booked on an early flight out from Heathrow to begin a three-date visit to Holland. The London Evening news reported that they'd sworn at a check-in desk assistant and that one of them vomited in a bin – a complete fabrication, but indicative of how they were to be treated by the tabloid media. Fearing for the company's reputation, EMI dropped the group a few days later, with the group keeping the balance of their advance.

Meanwhile, there were growing problems within the group itself, and their last gig of the tour at the Paradiso, Amsterdam would be Glen Matlock's last with the Pistols until their return two decades later. Talks were being held behind Matlock's back about replacing him with Rotten's friend and already notorious punk scenester Sid Vicious. On February 11, Sid rehearsed for the first time with the Pistols at their Denmark Street rehearsal studio/flat.

Glen Matlock:
I always wanted a band like The Who or the Stones, not necessarily to sound like them but to have some kind of career. But Malcolm McLaren was a shit-stirrer. He played this game of pitching me against John. Now we realise there was a lot of false information going between us.

John Lydon:
That is very true. We were too young to see what that was about. It was a divide and conquer. But Malcolm doesn't really know how to manipulate people. He didn't realise how far it would go.

McLaren sent a telegram to the press at the end of February announcing Matlock has left the Pistols, citing his love of The Beatles as the problem, and Sid was installed as a full-time member. The fact Vicious was still learning the bass meant he didn't make any serious musical contribution when the group went into Wessex Studios in

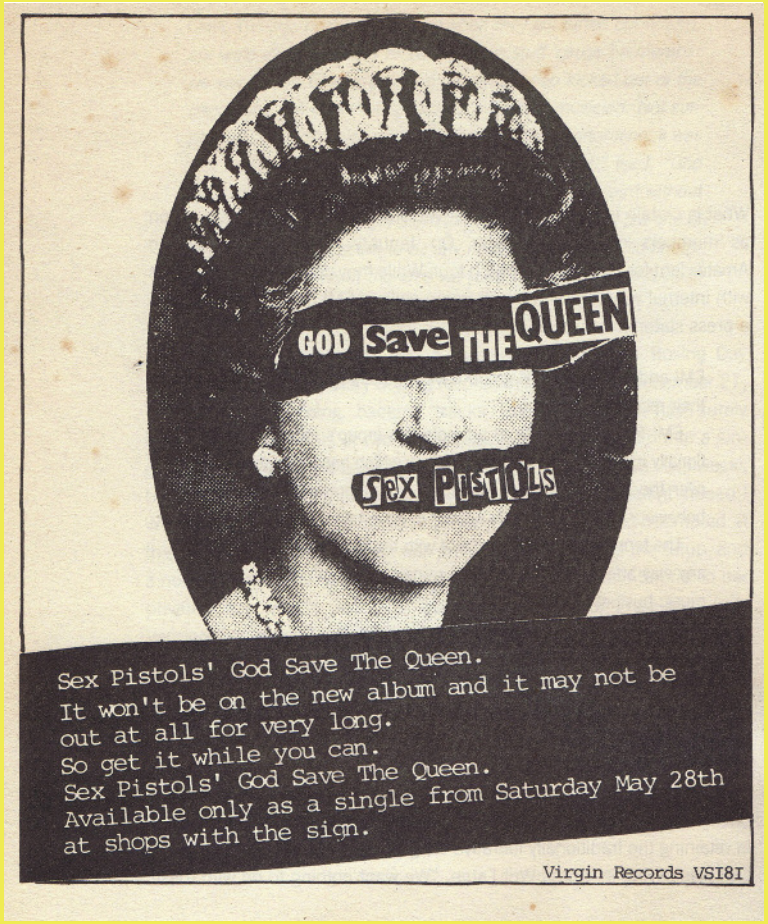
‘God Save The Queen’ music press advert

early March to record ‘God Save The Queen’. The session saw the Sex Pistols reacquainted with ex-Roxy Music, Pink Floyd and Badfinger producer Chris Thomas, and engineer Bill Price, the team that had recorded the ‘Anarchy in the UK’ single in October 1976. Friction arose between veterans and upstarts.

John Lydon:
I remember the nausea of waiting two days for a drum kit to be set up, and days of hi-hat tapping. It was too much. But you learn to be patient and control your energy.

Chris Thomas (producer):
Steve did everything once Glen left. Sid’s not on the records. Perhaps just a bit of muffled, subsonic bass on ‘God Save The Queen’ and ‘Bodies’.

Steve Jones:
When we first went in Wessex we went in through this side door. Freddie Mercury was there doing a vocal take and we walked right through with our guitars. He threw a wobbler.


GOD Save THE QUEEN
Sex Pistols
Sex Pistols' God Save The Queen.
It won't be on the new album and it may not be
out at all for very long.
So get it while you can.
Sex Pistols' God Save The Queen.
Available only as a single from Saturday May 28th
at shops with the sign.
Virgin Records VSI8I

On March 9, the Pistols signed with A&M, who like Virgin Records two months later perhaps didn’t stop to consider the impact of Matlock’s loss. The band were only on the label for seven days, before being sacked once again. Their second day on the label gave a taste of the anarchic behaviour to come, when the group re-staged their signing outside Buckingham Palace, then held an early morning press conference at the nearby Regent Palace Hotel. After swiping bottles of vodka from the press conference Paul and Sid have a fist-fight in the car. Afterwards the group briefly returned to Wessex Studios, before running riot at the record company’s offices, where Jones had sex with one of the secretaries in the toilets.

If A&M were still in doubt about what signing the Pistols meant, they were reminded in spectacular fashion two days later when, out on the town with Rotten and friend Jah Wobble, Sid picked a fight with Old Grey Whistle Test presenter ‘Whispering’ Bob Harris at rock’n’roll hang-out the Speakeasy. In the scuffle, Sid cut Harris’s sound engineer, George Nicholson, with a broken beer mug, leaving him with a head-wound.

John Lydon:
I don’t know much about it. That was basically Sid. He couldn’t fight his way out of a crisp packet, poor sod. Brave, though. But none of us were superheroes, we didn’t have to be! If you’re gonna stand up and say something in this life, you’re gonna get it from somewhere.

The incident horrified A&M, who the following week dropped the group, writing off their £75,000 advance. A brief A&M press release stated “There is no longer any association between A&M Records and the Sex Pistols. Production of their single ‘God Save The Queen’, which has been tentatively scheduled for release later this month, has been halted”. 25,000 copies of the single had already been pressed but were ordered to be destroyed. However a handful survived and are now highly collectable.

Again without a record company, Sid played his first gig with the band a week later at the Notre Dame Church Hall just off Leicester Square in London’s West End, at a free show set up at last minute especially for filming by an American NBC news crew. To escape the stink of the A&M sacking, the group flew out for disastrous ‘holiday’ to Jersey, where Sid farted in the face of a customs official conducting a body search and the Pistols were given 24 hours’ notice to leave the island.

The group then travelled to West Berlin, a trip which inspired Rotten to write the lyrics for Holidays In The Sun.

John Lydon:
I loved it, I love travelling. Hardly ever sleep, always looking out of the window. Berlin was a very different town then. It was like that scene in Apocalypse Now when they go up the river and they see the flares and the party going on, all the soldiers on acid… That's what Berlin was like, with a chaotic war-zone wrapped around it. The Communists were looking in on this adventure playground. Quite mental.

On their return, Sid, now using needles, was admitted to St Anne's hospital in Tottenham, suffering from hepatitis. (His new girlfriend, Johnny Thunders & The Heartbreakers groupie Nancy Spungen, had introduced him to hard drugs.) Meanwhile, McLaren had a meeting with Alf Garnet creator Johnny Speight about writing the screenplay for a Sex Pistols film.

John Lydon:
I never spoke to Malcolm during [this period], and hadn't for a long time before, not even during the Glen rift. I'd stopped listening to him, I didn't trust him, I didn't like him. Secretly he was trying to put himself at the forefront. That's why I'm suspicious of people commenting about this record, because that started with Malcolm trying to say it was his game. And it wasn't.

With the Pistols back in Wessex recording the album with their money, the search for a record deal continued. The Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations, the perfect backdrop for the release of 'God Save The Queen', were looming in early June, but talks with Richard Branson's Virgin Records to sign the group were dragging. Meanwhile, fear of protests and aggro meant the Pistols were effectively barred from playing live in the UK. The Pistols eventually signed a three-album deal with Virgin Records in mid-May for £15,000, with further payments totalling £50,000; it was their third UK record contract in nine months. However, there were more set-backs to the release of 'GSTQ' when A&M refused to hand over the original metal plates used to press the single and then workers at the CBS-owned pressing plant making the 45 threatened to strike over the song's controversial lyrics.

'Pretty Vacant' music press ad, July

The single finally appeared on May 29 and was promptly banned on radio and TV, while Woolworth's, Boots and W.H. Smith all refused to stock it nevertheless it sold over 150,000 in just 5 days, entering the UK Singles charts at Number 11 on June 2. When Jubilee day arrived, the Pistols promoted the single that evening by performing on a pleasure boat sailing on the Thames past the heart of British politics, the Houses of Parliament. After the Pistols' set, the captain radio-ed for help and police boarded the boat when it docked. Several of the group's entourage were arrested, including McLaren, Vivienne Westwood, Sophie Richmond, Fred Vermorel and Jamie Reid; along with John's brother Jimmy.

John Lydon:
I didn't even know it was Jubilee. All I knew was we had a gig on a barge, that was it. All that police attention on the River Thames, wow. OK, we're annoying someone here, big time, which is great.

Sid, Steve, John and Paul, pose in front of posters they've stapled to the large double-doors of Virgin's Vernon Yard office, May 23rd. *Photo: Barry Plummer*

'NMTB' collage poster (enclosed with initial copies of the 'NMTB' album)

Julien Temple (filmmaker) :
It was fantastic how the group became the voice of a whole section of society who didn't like the Royal Family or what it represented.

Despite out-selling the Number 1 record of the week ('The First Cut Is The Deepest' by Rod Stewart), 'God Save The Queen' mysteriously stalled at Number 2. Anti-Pistols sentiment didn't end with the chart compilers, either: on the streets of London, Jamie Reid was attacked by Teddy Boys, Paul Cook was hit with an iron bar, and Rotten was stabbed outside a pub near Wessex Studios and then assaulted again at Dingwalls club in Camden.

Paul Cook:
'God Save The Queen' was definitely the pinnacle. It all went sour after that.

With the group prevented from playing live and seemingly unable even to walk the streets, tensions in and around the group mounted. Much of the friction stemmed from Lydon's exasperation with McLaren, who consistently sided against him when it came to making decisions about the day-to-day running of the group. Rotten was inflamed by McLaren's preoccupation with making a Pistols feature film and the revelation that, far from the group being 'banned' from live appearances, McLaren had been turning down gigs to retain the Pistols' mystique.

Meanwhile, he was becoming further isolated within the Pistols camp by Sid's distraction with Nancy Spungen and, despite the lesson of his bout of hepatitis, the bassist's continued use of heroin. Virgin released the classic 'Pretty Vacant' in early July, but with Lydon arguing a promo video for the songs shouldn't be aired on the formulaic Top Of The Pops (against his wishes it is), the group appeared on the edge of collapse.

It was decided, as a quick fix, to play a hastily arranged tour of Scandinavia, followed, after more work on the album, by a 'secret' tour of the UK at the end of August for which the group performed under various pseudonyms, including The Tax Exiles, Acne Rabble and The Hamsters.

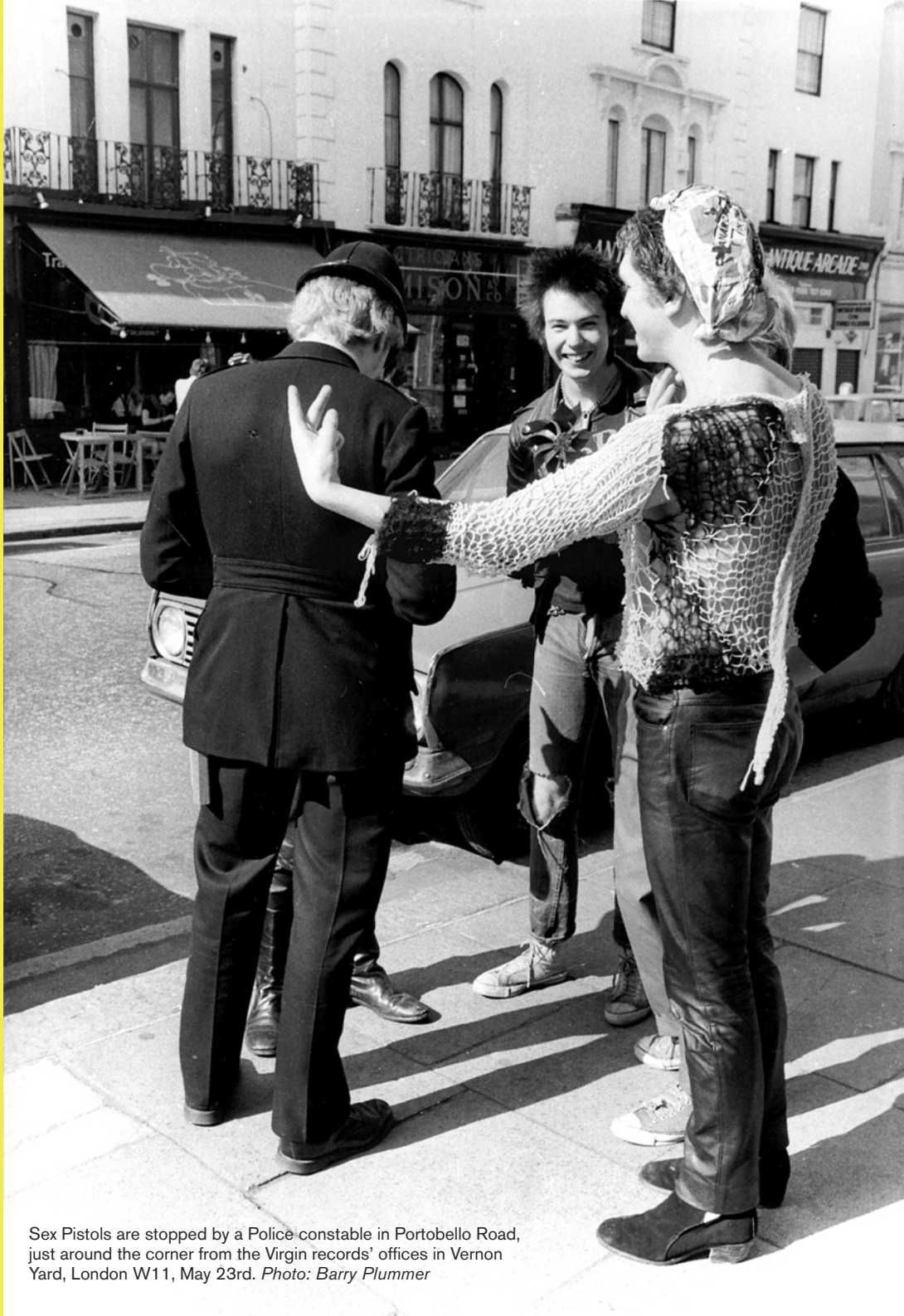
Steve Jones:
It was the best time, those shows were fucking great.

As the S.P.O.T.S (Sex Pistols On Tour Sectretly) tour wound up, the focus returned to the album, which was allegedly being deliberately delayed by Virgin in order to maximise the number of 'teaser' singles issued from the record. Lydon in particular incensed that fans are being ripped off by effectively having to pay for the same songs twice. Around this time, unofficial versions of the album, notably 'Spunk', comprised of Dave Goodman's demos, mysteriously become available as bootlegs - a move thought to be a ruse by Malcolm to provoke Virgin into action. Work begins on the iconic graphics for the 'Bollocks' artwork.

John Tiberi (road manager / facilitator):
Recording the album was quite boring, all the overdubs. Chris Thomas was very methodical, so was Bill Price. It was all based on a good backing track. That happened quickly.

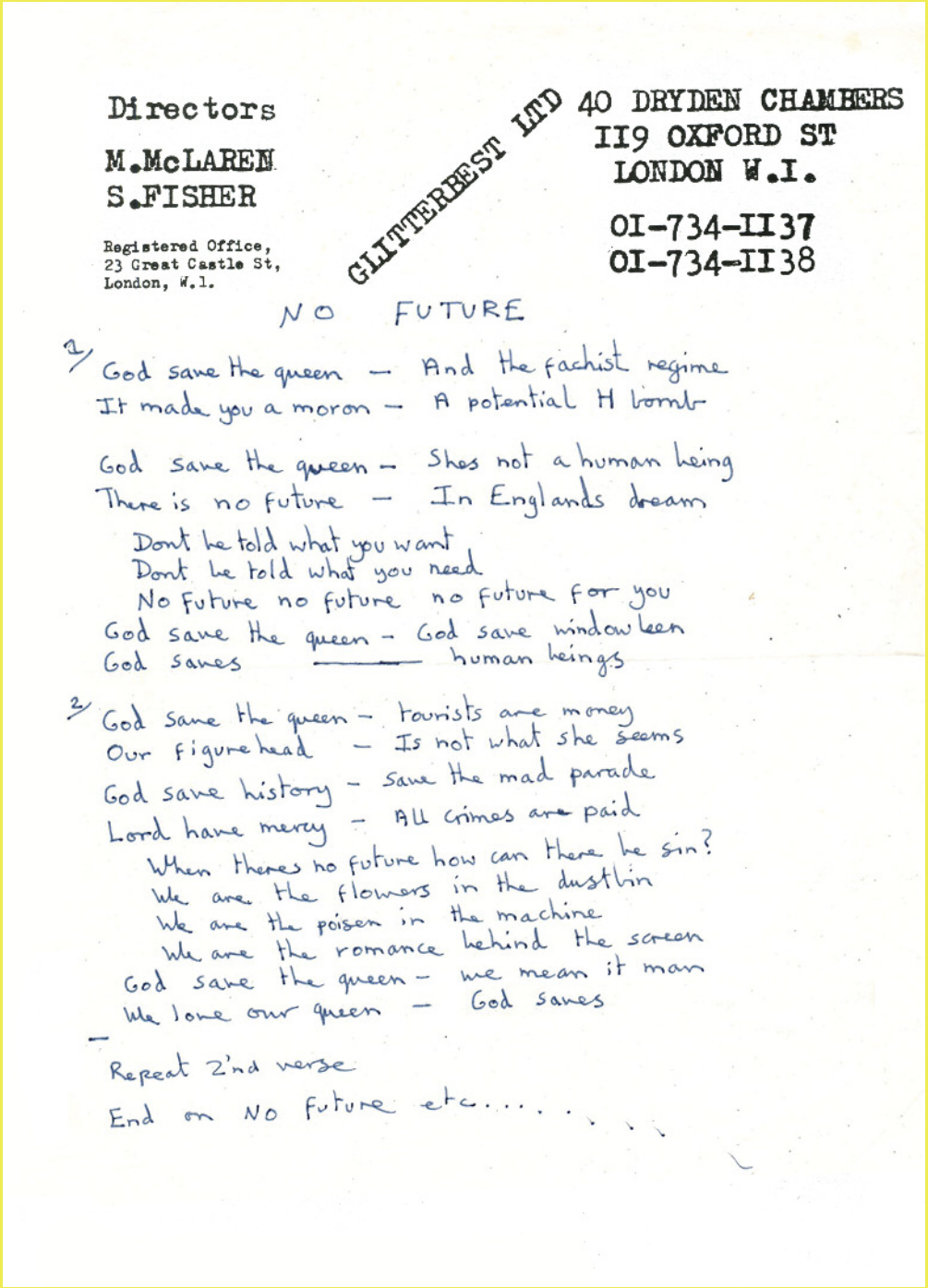
John Lydon:
We did a marvellous job of not going too fast on the songs. Keeping them in that nice, grinding, juggernaut Sex Pistols way. Not this hurrying to get to the end, or hurrying to get your record out.

'Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols' was finally released in the UK on October 28, though the French release on Barclay Records beat it to the shops by almost two weeks. The original version of the album initially included a one-sided 7" single of 'Submission' (along with a fold-out 'Never Mind The Bollocks' collage poster); the album was then rush re-released with 'Submission' added to the standard tracklisting, now totaling 12 tracks. It was called 'Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols' after a phrase Steve Jones had picked up from two West End hotdog sellers who would constantly say, "Never mind the bollocks…" to each other. Preceding the LP's release, on October 15 'Holidays In The Sun'/'Satellite' was released as a single. Boots, Woolworth's, and WH Smith ban the album but pre-release orders are so high it immediately charts at Number 1.



Sex Pistols are stopped by a Police constable in Portobello Road, just around the corner from the Virgin records' offices in Vernon Yard, London W11, May 23rd. *Photo: Barry Plummer*

‘God Save The Queen (No Future)’ original hand written lyrics



Directors
M.McLAREN
S.FISHER

Registered Office,
23 Great Castle St,
London, W.1.

GLITTERBEST LTD 40 DRYDEN CHAMBERS
II9 OXFORD ST
LONDON W.I.
OI-734-II37
OI-734-II38

NO FUTURE

2/ God save the queen — And the fachist regime
It made you a moron — A potential H bomb

God save the queen — Shes not a human being
There is no future — In Englands dream
Dont be told what you want
Dont be told what you need
No future no future no future for you
God save the queen — God save windowleen
God saves ——— human beings

3/ God save the queen — Tourists are money
Our figurehead — Is not what she seems
God save history — Save the mad parade
Lord have mercy — All crimes are paid
When theres no future how can there be sin?
We are the flowers in the dustbin
We are the poisen in the machine
We are the romance behind the screen
God save the queen — we mean it man
We love our queen — God saves

Repeat 2’nd verse
End on NO future etc.....

Jon Savage (reviewing ‘Never Mind The Bollocks’ in Sounds):
“As rock’n’roll it can’t be faulted.”

Several record stores in the UK were raided by police for advertising the record in their windows, as “bollocks” was considered an offensive word. The council in Nottingham even went as far as taking legal action against Virgin, citing the ‘Indecent Advertising Act of 1889’. The label counter-attacked by aggressively defending the use of the word in court, arguing it was an old word for clergymen. The judge rules, “We must reluctantly find you not guilty…”

The effusive response to the album did little to heal the rifts within the group, and promotional duties saw them splitting into two factions: John/Sid and Paul/Steve. Meanwhile, Sid’s behaviour was causing grave concern for everybody. On November 30, the band were due to rehearse, but Vicious was the only member to turn up. Upset and angry, he returned to his digs at the Ambassador Hotel in Bayswater, where he got drunk and badly beat up Nancy Spungen. With McLaren’s support, the band seriously considered sacking Vicious from the group, but he was given a second chance on the understanding he tackled his drug habit and stayed away from Nancy.

In December, as they had in January, the Pistols let off steam with a mini-tour of Holland, before rounding off the year with some low-key UK shows promoted at short notice. The short jaunt culminated with an afternoon and evening gig on Xmas Day at Ivanhoe’s, Huddersfield – the group’s last ever performance in Britain until they returned in 1996. The afternoon show was for the children of striking firemen, laid-off workers, and kids from local children’s homes, followed by a full evening show for adults. Prior to the matinee kids show there was a party for the kids where they could win Sex Pistols prizes for disco dancing and doing impressions. During the kids show, John jumped into the crowd to dance with them, resulting in a cake fight.

John Lydon:
Huddersfield I remember very fondly. There was a lot of love in the house. Sid was great that day, playing with the kids. It was brilliant, everyone was in a good mood. I think if a kid doesn’t get what you do, then it’s not worked. They instantly understood

a song like 'Bodies' because they were closer to the chopping axe of abortion.

The group were then due to fly to the US to start a tour at Pittsburgh's Leona Theatre on December 28th ('Bollocks' had been released there in November), but problems with visas due to all four members' criminal records, plus McLaren's insistence the Pistols only play the Deep South and not the main centres of music (New York and Los Angeles), resulted in the show being cancelled. A week later on the January 5, 1978 the tour started in earnest Atlanta, Georgia… and by its conclusion at the Winterland Ballroom in San Francisco on January 14 the Pistols had split up, Lydon having finally had too much of McLaren's manipulative approach to band management.

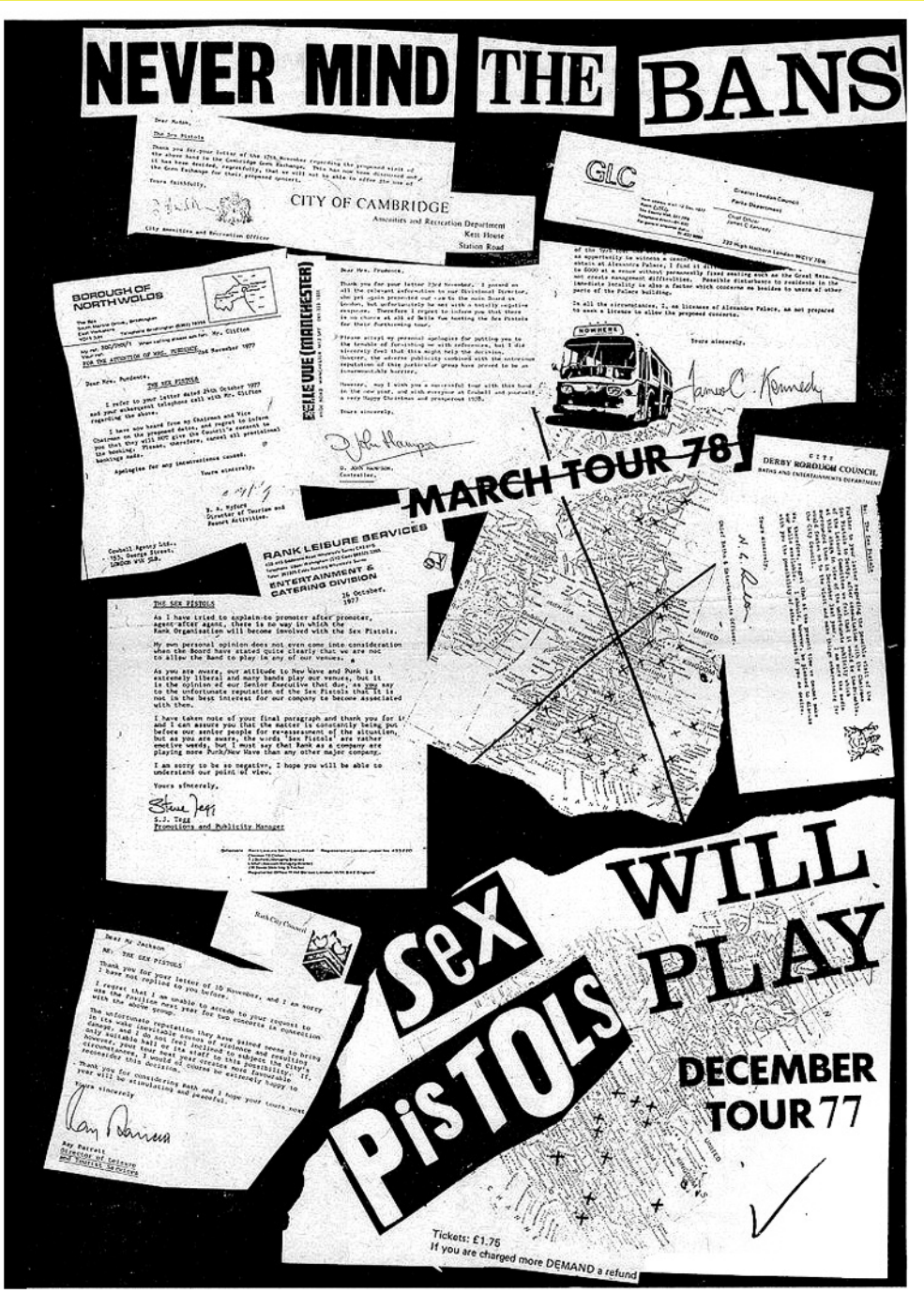
The events that followed make for another epic story – from McLaren finally making his Pistols film as 'The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle', directed by Julien Temple, to Sid Vicious's death from a heroin overdose not long after he (or perhaps someone else?) killed Nancy Spungen in a New York hotel room in October 1978, to John Lydon's superlative and pioneering work with PiL from 1978 to date, to the Sex Pistols' much-celebrated return with Matlock on bass in 1996, and much more…

But those stories will have to wait for another time. Meanwhile, enjoy

'NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS, HERE'S THE SEX PISTOLS'

– a record that age seemingly shall not weary, nor despite the stink it once caused, the years condemn…

'Never Mind The Bans' tour poster



PISTOLS SONG BY SONG...

'Holidays In The Sun' Virgin UK 7" single sleeve

HOLIDAYS IN THE SUN

Virgin single (October 1977); 'NMTB' album track

The idea for 'Holidays' germinated in late March during the Pistols' trip to West Berlin. Rotten was intrigued by the notion that the Communists were staring over the Berlin Wall from their look-out posts at one of Europe's most decadent party cities, a lonely Western outpost behind the Iron Curtain. Starting with the infamous quip, "A cheap holiday in other people's misery!", Rotten sings about package holidays as "the new Belsen" – referencing the notorious Nazi concentration camp – and muses on the atmosphere and irony of his Berlin experience. The song was written and arranged quickly and first recorded at Wessex in April 1977; it was the first new Pistols song written without Glen in the band.

BODIES

'NMTB' album track

The last addition to 'Never Mind The Bollocks', recorded at Wessex in June 1977, 'Bodies' was the most magnificently provocative track the Pistols ever recorded. Jones put the music to Rotten's story of Pauline, a groupie from Birmingham who once turned up at his house wearing only a see-through plastic bag. She apparently spent time in a mental institution, where, as the lyric attests, she had a tree-house in the grounds. The graphic description of an illegal abortion and the "Fuck this and fuck that…" rant in the third verse was central to 'Bollocks's attack on cultural taboos; Rotten relished playing it at the kids matinee show in Huddersfield on Christmas Day 1977. "The children loved it," he says.

NO FEELINGS

'NMTB' album track

'No Feelings' was one of the earliest Pistols originals, and began as a manic Jones riff that Rotten put words to. It was recorded first by Chris Spedding at Majestic Studios in May 1976 (as a demo tape to give record companies)and then two months later by the band's soundman Dave Goodman at the group's rehearsal space in Denmark Street, with overdubs at Riverside studios in Chiswick. It was Goodman's version that was used on the B-side of the withdrawn 'God Save The Queen' single on A&M. A third version was demoed with EMI's Mike Thorne in December 1976, before the final version emerged at Wessex during April/May 1977.

LIAR

'NMTB' album track

Another early song, this time stemming from a Matlock chord progression, though it wasn't recorded in 1976 by either Chris Spedding or Dave Goodman. It was, however, demoed by EMI's Mike Thorne in the 8-track facility at the label's offices in Manchester Square at the end of that year and again with Goodman at Gooseberry in January 1977. Chris Thomas re-recorded it for 'Bollocks' at Wessex in April/May 1977. The original "liar" of the song has never been identified, but Rotten once dedicated the song to the Labour prime minister Harold Wilson and it became an increasingly handy dig at Malcolm McLaren during his and Rotten's growing estrangement throughout 1977.

'God Save The Queen' Virgin UK 7" single sleeve

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

Withdrawn A&M single (March 1977); Virgin single (May 1977); 'NMTB' album track

Rotten wrote the lyric at the end of summer 1976, unaware of the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations, then nine months away. The music began life a few weeks later in October, from a bass riff Matlock had conjured up during down-time on the Goodman 'Anarchy' sessions. Glen had his own vision for the song, but Rotten had other ideas, unveiling to the band in rehearsal the now legendary lyrics: "God save the Queen/The Fascist regime/She made you a moron/A potential H-bomb." The first attempt to record it was in early December '76, during the demo session at EMI's headquarters, when it was still called 'No Future' and ran to over five minutes in length. Chris Thomas recorded it again on December 27, then in January Dave Goodman taped a version at Gooseberry Studios following the group's returned from their three-gig tour of Holland. None of these versions captured the song's deliciously offensive and irreverent spirit, and it was re-recorded at Wessex Studios in March 1977 for the withdrawn A&M single.

PROBLEMS

'NMTB' album track

'Problems' was one of the three songs – together with Pretty Vacant and No Feelings – recorded by Chris Spedding in May 1976 for the band's first demo. It was written one evening in their Denmark Street rehearsal room, where stuck for a riff Jones simply played the ascending chord sequence A, B, C and D, which became the chorus. Glen came up with the intro and verse music, while Rotten turn in a chilly, defiant declaration of his refusal to comfort. The problem ain't him – it's you. And what you gonna do? 'Problems' was demoed again at EMI in December 1976 and once more a month later at Gooseberry, before the final version was nailed at Wessex in April/May 1977. The song would seem increasingly resonant for the group as relations among themselves and with McLaren deteriorated.

SEVENTEEN

'NMTB' album track

'Seventeen' – then know as 'Lazy Sod' – predated Rotten joining the band in August 1975. Written by Steve, its lyrics made their new singer laugh out loud when he saw them. "Everything was misspelled," he remembers. "One of the original lines was 'I'm all alone/Give the dog a bone.'" Rotten gave the song a re-write and it became a staple of their live set. There was only one attempt to record it – with Goodman at Denmark Street in July 1976 – before it was worked on at Wessex in April/May 1977.

'Anarchy in the UK', German 7" sleeve

ANARCHY IN THE UK

EMI single (October 1976);
'NMTB' album track

Together with 'God Save The Queen', 'Anarchy In The UK' was the Pistols' great two-fingered salute to the political Establishment. The song came together in early summer 1976, from a chord sequence Matlock invented on the spot in rehearsals, and for which Rotten penned his incendiary lyrics during that same session. (Matlock, however, famously disliked the "I am an Antichrist/I am an anarchist" pun in the first line.) When the Pistols signed to EMI on 8 October, it was viewed as a perfect mission statement, and Dave Goodman – who'd demoed the song in July 1976 – was recruited to record it for their debut single. After several days at Lansdowne studios and then Wessex, the track still wasn't to the band or label's liking, so eventually Chris Thomas was drafted in to finish the record. The powerful final version led to his later work with the band on a session in late December and, of course, his gig the following year as 'Bollocks' producer.

'Anarchy in the UK', Dutch 7" sleeve

SUBMISSION

'NMTB' album track; 'NMTB' one-sided free 7" single

'Submission' 7" one-sided single

In early summer 1977, the Pistols rehearsed for a few weeks at the Roundhouse in Camden Town. At the time, the friction between Matlock and Rotten was proving counter-productive, so McLaren gave them £20 to go to the pub and sort out their differences. During the drink-up, they chanced upon some interesting musical common ground: The Doors. Also, "for the first and last time", Rotten emphasises, Malcolm had given them a list of buzz words to inspire songs. The singer mischievously suggested turning the fetishistic idea of "submission" into a "sub mission", a mission in a submarine. With help from the riff of The Doors' Hello, I Love You, the song took shape. It was first demoed by Dave Goodman in July 1976, before taking its final, atmospheric form at Wessex in summer 1977.

'Pretty Vacant' Virgin UK 7" single sleeve

PRETTY VACANT

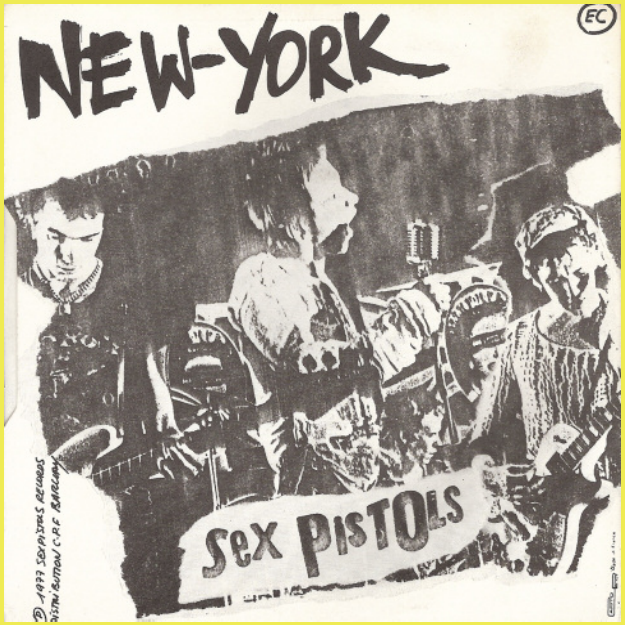
Virgin single (July 1977); 'NMTB' album track

The trump card in the Pistols' pack in their very early days, 'Pretty Vacant' was written by Matlock, apparently – after of all things – hearing ABBA's 'SOS', with several lines in the lyric later sharpened by Rotten. The singer also insisted on pronouncing "vacant" as "vay-cunt". It was demoed by both Spedding and Goodman in summer 1976, and again by Goodman at Gooseberry in January 1977, and became one of the first songs to be completed for 'Bollocks' in March 1977.

NEW YORK

'NMTB' album track

McLaren had briefly managed The New York Dolls, and was bedazzled by their city and the music scene that was fomenting there. Rotten responded with a sardonic comment on the whole set-up, referencing the Dolls' song titles ("you poor little faggot, you're sealed with a kiss") and quoting from Beefheart in "everybody knows Japan is a dishpan". Jones, meanwhile, was chiefly responsible for the music. The song wasn't demoed until the January 1977 Gooseberry sessions, and was then re-recorded for 'Bollocks' three months later at Wessex and overdubbed significantly thereafter.



'New York' 7" single sleeve, France. *Courtesy: Roger Armstrong*

EMI UNLIMITED EDITION

'NMTB' album track

After they were sacked from EMI in early January 1977, the Pistols moved with remarkable speed to write this attack on the "fools" at the record label who bowed to pressure to ditch the group. It was demoed by Dave Goodman at Gooseberry at the end of that month and was one of the earliest 'Bollocks' songs worked on at Wessex, three months later in April. It was the last Pistols song to carry a Glen Matlock co-wring credit, the bassist leaving the group in the weeks following the Gooseberry demo session.

DID YOU NO WRONG

B-side of the Virgin "God Save The Queen" 7" single

Pre-dating Lydon's joining of the group, 'Did You No Wrong' had begun life as a song called 'Scarface', its Faces-riff invented by original Pistols guitarist Wally Nightingale and lyrics (described by Matlock as "truly horrendous") by his father. Lydon re-wrote the words and the song became a powerful opener at early gigs; it wasn't recorded until March 1977, when it was taped at the 'God Save The Queen' session at Wessex.

NO FUN

B-side of the "Pretty Vacant" 7" single

This Stooges classic was sometimes used to close the Pistols' live sets, and would become the last song they ever played together in the 70s with Sid Vicious, at the Winterland Ballroom in San Francisco on 14 January 1978. Dave Goodman taped this version as a warm-up during the aborted "Anarchy In The UK" session at Wessex in October '76; it originally ran to just under seven minutes in length but was edited down to 6.32 to fit onto 7" vinyl.

SATELLITE

B-side of the "Holidays In The Sun" 7" single

A staple in the Pistols' set since early summer 1976, "Satellite" was constructed around a strident Steve Jones riff with echoes of The Who's "Substitute". The song satirises the inhabitants of the dreary satellite towns and suburbs of London – Milton Keynes, St Albans, Bromley, Beaconsfield – where the band built a following in the early days. Recorded at Wessex in April/May 1977.

Page 52
NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS
June 25th, 1977
Sex Pistols
BANNED
W.H. Smith's Top 20 Elephant and Castle. June 13th.
BBC RADIO ONE
Banned. "It is in gross bad taste" Charles McLelland. The ban covers the whole of the BBC.
WH SMITH
Banned at all branches.
Banned. The nations' Brewers have refused to allow Sex Pistols on any of the Juke Boxes.
Boots
Banned at all branches.
IBA
Banned. "Nothing should be broadcast which offends good taste or decency. And that includes all radio advertising."
TOP OF THE POPS
Banned. "It is quite unsuitable for an entertainment show like Top of The Pops"
208 LUX
Banned. And Luxembourg are independant of the BBC and the IBA. The ban by Luxembourg, the IBA and the BBC mean that the single is barred from every British radio station.
GLC & LOCAL COUNCILS
Banned. Sex Pistols are not even allowed to play in London or in most other parts of the country. And when they try to.....
Banned. A Thames River boat party was broken up by police on Jubilee Day. Fifteen people were arrested.
WORTH WOOLWORTH
Banned at all branches.
LOCAL RADIO
Banned. No local stations will play the single.
THAMES
Banned from advertising. Not even 'God Save The Queen', but simply the new signing with Virgin. And all the ad said was: "You thought you had got rid of us, but you haven't"
MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
"If pop music is going to be used to destroy our established institutions, then it ought to be destroyed first." Lambeth M.P. Marcus Lipton
Banned. The Pistols were fired and "Anarchy in the UK" was withdrawn as it hit the charts.
A&M RECORDS
Banned. Just three days after signing.
ASSOCIATED PRESS
Banned. One of Britains' impartial Press Agencies has refused to circulate news stories about Sex Pistols.
SOUNDS PRINTERS
Banned. The printers, not the paper, deliberately ommited part of an ad for 'God Save The Queen' without informing Virgin or the Sex Pistols.
TONY BLACKBURN
"It is disgraceful and makes me ashamed of the pop world, but it is a fad that won't last, we DJ's have ignored them and if everyone else did perhaps they would go away."
JOHN PEEL
"One of the greatest Rock records ever made" (Sounds June 13th But the BBC won't let him play it.
CAPITAL RADIO 194
Eventually, banned. But Capital were the only station in the country to question the IBA ban. And 'God Save The Queen' made their Number One slot.
MELODY MAKER, SOUNDS, N.M.E. & RECORD MIRROR
Sex Pistols 'God Save The Queen' is record of the week.
'God Save The Queen.' No.1 in NME thanks to you and England's independant record stores. Support real record shops.

NME full-page ad: 'God Save The Queen' Banned, June 25th

Design and artwork by Phil Smee at *Waldo's Design & Dream Emporium*

Remastered by Tim Young with Chris Thomas at *Metropolis Mastering*

Sleeve notes by Pat Gilbert

Creative direction, archive research and compilation by John Rambo Stevens and Scotty Murphy

Memorabilia courtesy of Scotty Murphy, Paul Burgess Archive, Andy Biddle and Roger Armstrong

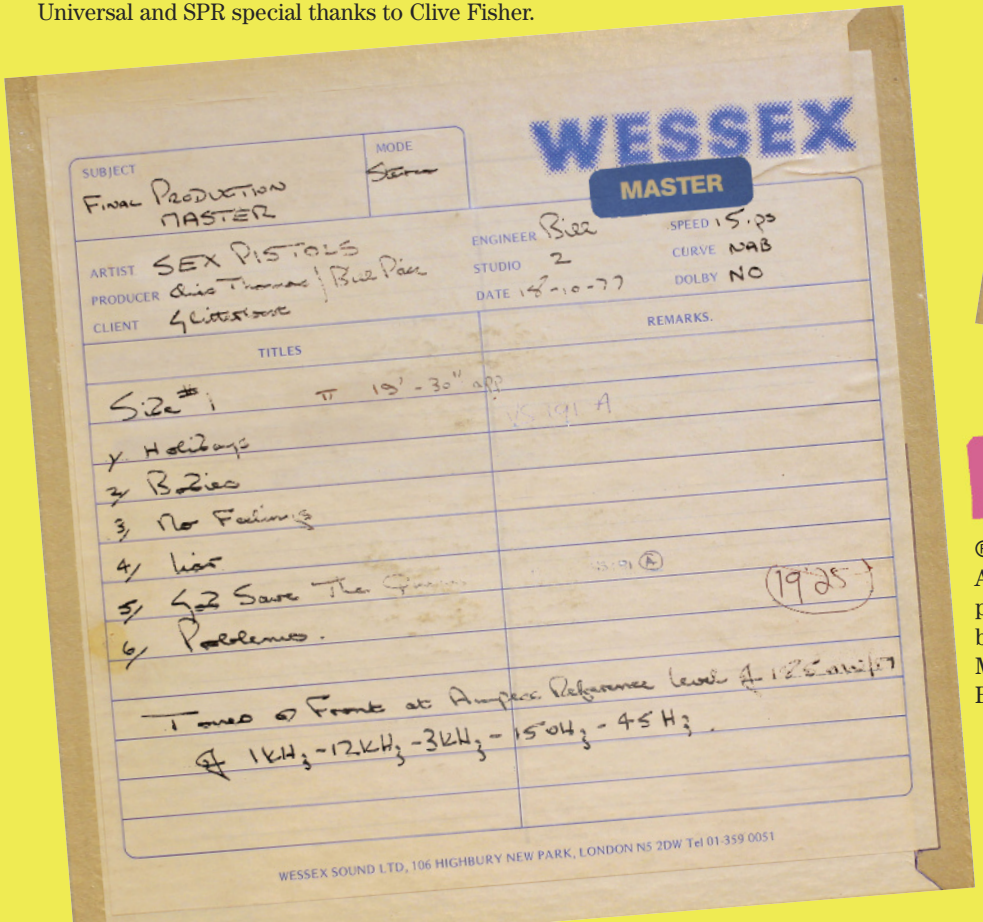
Product management and creative direction by Johnny Chandler, assisted by Paul Fernandes for *Universal Music Catalogue*

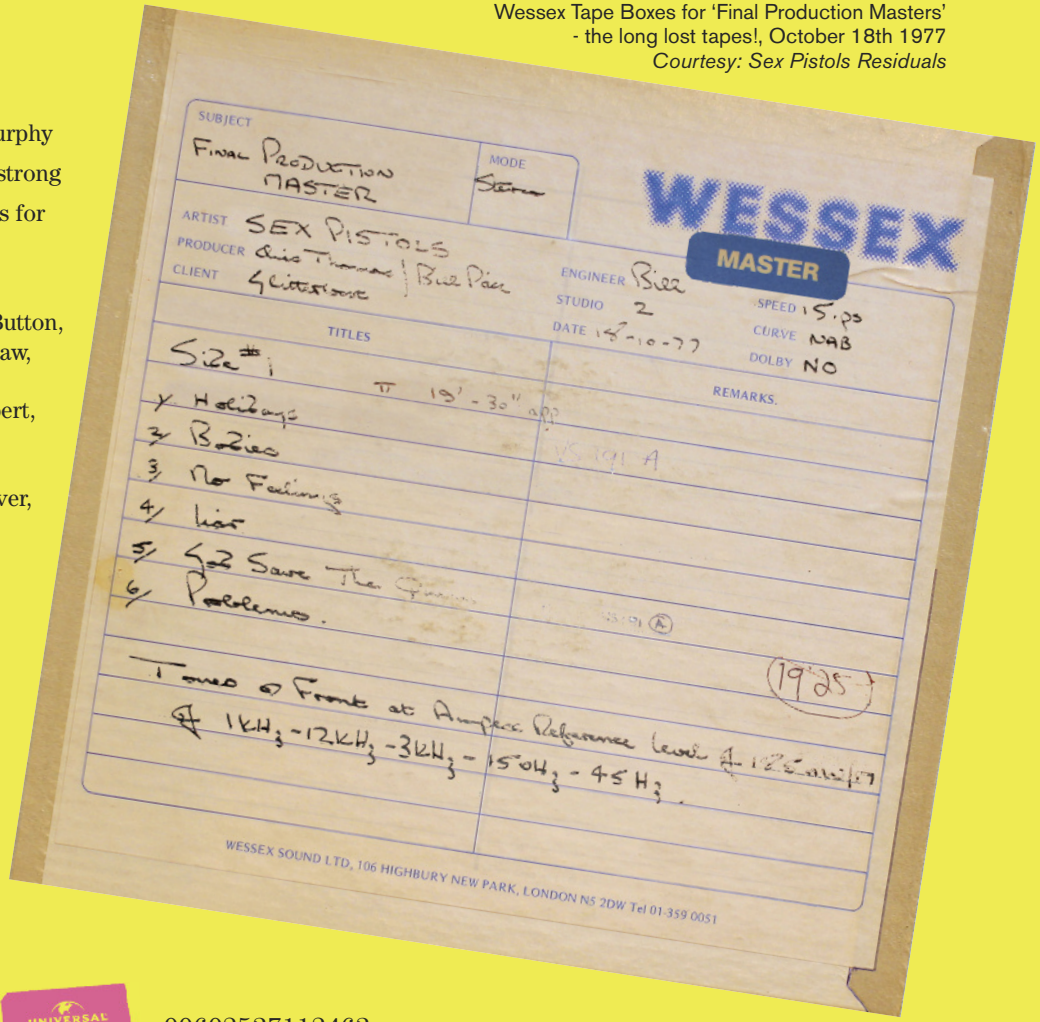
Executive Producers Anita Camarata & John Rambo Stevens

Universal thanks to Roger Armstrong, Adam Barker, Tracey Birnham, Justin Brown, Peter Button, Anita Camarata, Noelle Campbell, John Chadwick, Eon Clifford, Richard Cooper, Andrew Daw, Ingrid Durant, Jason Elliott, Carol Ellis, Julian Fernandez, Scott Getley, Pat Gilbert, Alexis Grower, Sam Hales, Steve Hammonds, Heather Hathwell, David Joseph, Penny Lambert, Rupert Lloyd, Cynthia Lole, Tony Lyons, Ronan Mason, Scotty Murphy, Alex Myers, Kevin Phelan, David Ross, Iain Scatz, Harish Shah, Emma Shalless, Karen Simmonds, Phil Smee, Greg Snowdon, John Rambo Stevens, David Stewart, Gary Stiffelman, Lutz Stoever, Amanda & Julien Temple, Chris Thomas, John Tiberi, Nathan Tiller and Allen Ward.

Universal and SPR special thanks to Clive Fisher.

Wessex Tape Boxes for 'Final Production Masters'
- the long lost tapes!, October 18th 1977
Courtesy: Sex Pistols Residuals





00602537112463

℗ & © 2012 Sex Pistols Residuals under exclusive license to Universal Music Operations Ltd. A Universal Music Company. All rights of the manufacturer and of the owner of the work produced reserved. Unauthorised copying, hiring, lending, public performance and broadcasting of this recording is prohibited.
Made in the EU.
BIEM/SDRM.

www.sexpistolsofficial.com

pretty vacant
liar
no feelings
NEW YORK
GOD Save THE QUEEN
SEVENTEEN
ANARCHY IN THE U.K.
EMI Unlimited Edition
problems
bodies
holidays in The Sun